

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/CAN:DAKRUSE:MGH

APPROVED BY EUR:WSTABLER

ARA:MR. SMITH (SUBS)

EB/ITP/EWT -MR. WRIGHT (SUBSTANCE)

L - MR. GANTZ (SUBSTANCE)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, ESTC, CU, CA

SUBJECT: LITTON SUBSIDIARY SALE TO CUBA

1. CANADIAN CHARGE MCKINNEY CALLED ON ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY STABLER DECEMBER 24 TO MAKE OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT ABORTED SALE BY CANADIAN-BASED LITTON SUBSIDIARY OF \$500,000 WORTH OF OFFICE EQUIPMENT TO CUBA. MCKINNEY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT US GOVERNMENT HAD NOT BEEN OFFICIALLY INVOLVED IN LITTON'S APPARENT DECISION NOT TO GO THROUGH WITH SALE BUT HE SAID THAT GOC CONSIDERED UNOFFICIAL VIEWS OF US TREASURY OFFICIALS GIVEN TO LITTON, I.E. THAT LITTON WOULD BE TURNED DOWN IF IT ASKED US PERMISSION FOR DEAL, WERE CLEARLY REASON FOR CANCELLATION OF CUBAN SALE. MCKINNEY NOTED THAT LITTON'S DECISION WAS FRONT-PAGE NEWS ALL OVER CANADA AND WAS THREATENING TO BE ANOTHER "CAUSE CELEBRE" OF US INTERFERENCE IN CANADIAN TRADE. IT WAS A MATTER OF SERIOUS CONCERN TO GOC AND CONSEQUENTLY HE SAID THAT GOC WAS ASKING USG TO TAKE ALL

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POSSIBLE STEPS TO ALLOW DEAL TO GO THROUGH.

2. IN RESPONSE, STABLER UNDERSCORED FACT THAT US GOVERNMENT HAS NOT BEEN OFFICIALLY SEIZED WITH PROBLEM IN THAT LITTON HAS NEVER MADE ANY FORMAL REQUEST FOR THIS SALE TO CUBA BY ITS SUBSIDIARY. HE ASSURED MCKINNEY THAT US IS SENSITIVE TO CANADIAN CONCERNS AND SHARES DESIRE TO AVOID HAVING MATTER BECOME BILATERAL POLITICAL PROBLEM, ALTHOUGH HE NOTED IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHAT USG COULD DO AT THIS TIME. STABLER PROMISED TO TRANSMIT CANADIAN CONCERNS TO HIGHER LEVELS IN THE DEPARTMENT AND BE BACK IN TOUCH WITH MCKINNEY IN NEXT SEVERAL DAYS.

3. CONTRARY TO REPORTED PUBLIC STATEMENT BY ITC MINISTER GILLESPIE THAT CANADA WAS SENDING STRONG NOTE OF PROTEST, MCKINNEY MADE STATEMENT ORALLY. HE INDICATED THE GOC WOULD FOLLOW UP WITH STIFF FORMAL PROTEST IF THIS SALE NOT PERMITTED TO GO THROUGH. KISSINGER

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